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**UNITED
STATES
GOVERNMENT
PRINTING
OFFICE**

Office of Congressional and Public Affairs 202-512-1991 <http://www.gpo.gov>

For Release: IMMEDIATE
April 26, 2002

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No. 02-11

GPO PRESENTS FY 2003 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST TO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Government Printing Office (GPO) began the presentation of its FY 2003 appropriations request to Congress by appearing before the House Subcommittee on Legislative Appropriations on Wednesday, April 24.

Testifying before Subcommittee Chairman Charles H. Taylor, Deputy Public Printer Robert T. Mansker requested a total of \$129.3 million for FY 2003. The request includes \$95.2 million for Congressional Printing and Binding and \$34.1 million for Salaries and Expenses of the Superintendent of Documents.

The request represents an increase of \$14.7 million over the amount approved for FY 2002. However, the increase includes \$6.9 million to cover the cost of post-retirement benefits for the employees covered by the two appropriations, in compliance with a directive from the Office of Management and Budget. It also includes approximately \$5.9 million for congressional printing to fund a prior year (FY 2001) shortfall in that appropriation. Net of these amounts, GPO's request for FY 2003 represents an increase of \$1.9 million, or less than 2%, over the amount approved by Congress for the previous year.

In his testimony, Mansker noted that GPO has submitted a request for a supplemental appropriation for FY 2002 to fund the \$5.9 million shortfall in congressional printing and a \$2 million project for asbestos abatement in its central office buildings in Washington, DC. Approval of the supplemental request would reduce GPO's estimated requirements for FY 2003 by \$5.9 million.

A noteworthy component of the FY 2003 request for the Salaries and Expenses appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents is a plan to commit approximately \$2.6 million to the replacement of obsolete formats, servers, and other equipment, and for improvements to enhance online services provided

through **GPO Access**, GPO's online information service (www.gpo.gov/gpoaccess). Mansker observed that, "it is essential that we enhance our data archiving capabilities, including data migration activities to refresh essential legislative and regulatory online files." This funding increase would be made possible primarily through savings generated from the reduced distribution of printing publications to depository libraries, as a result of the predominant role that online dissemination of Government information now plays in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). A management audit of GPO, conducted in 1998 by Booz-Allen & Hamilton, Inc., recommended that GPO seek increased funding from Congress for **GPO Access**.

GPO's Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation covers the costs of producing the *Congressional Record*, bills, reports, hearings, documents, and related legislative products. Each year, a substantial volume of this work is requisitioned from GPO. This appropriation also covers the cost of building congressional information databases for dissemination via **GPO Access**.

The majority of the Superintendent of Documents Salaries and Expenses Appropriation is for the FDLP, under which Government publications are distributed in print, microfiche, or electronic formats to approximately 1,300 libraries nationwide for the free use of the public. It also funds the cataloging and indexing of Government publications, the distribution of Government publications as required by law, and the distribution of US. Government publications to foreign libraries which in turn agree to provide copies of their official publications to the Library of Congress. In addition, this appropriation provides the majority of funding for **GPO Access**, which provides online access to nearly 225,000 Government titles, and from which the public is now retrieving an average of 31 million Government documents each month.

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